The regular meeting of the Board of Health was held on Tuesday, April 12, 2022. Adrienne DeSantis, Secretary; Kelly Lamas, Member; and Antonio Tavares, Member were present. Office Assistant Tim Fontaine recording the minutes. The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Ms. DeSantis.

Board Members welcomed the newly elected member, Antonio "Tony" Tavares. He was elected to the Board on March 28, 2022 to a three-year term.

Motion made by Ms. DeSantis to appoint Ms. Lamas as Chairperson, seconded by Mr. Tavares. All in favor 3-0. Motion made by Ms. Lamas to appoint Ms. DeSantis as Secretary, seconded by Mr. Tavares. All in favor 3-0. Reorganization will be sent to all Town Departments.

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Board members signed departmental bills.

Motion made by Ms. DeSantis to accept the minutes of March 22, 2022 as written. Seconded by Ms. Lamas. All in favor 2-0. Minutes were signed by Ms. DeSantis.

The meeting was joined by Chrissy Florence, Health Supervisor for the Town of Palmer, to discuss the possibility of regionalization. This is the 4th round of RFR funding being provided by the State. Ms. Florence discussed having the Town of Ludlow join with the Towns of Palmer, West Brookfield, and Warren. This funding would provide $300,000 in funding for a 3-year term to give the towns the ability to hire shared services to fill in the gaps between the towns. This funding has the ability to be renewed for two additional terms. Some of the possible positions would be a Shared Services Coordinator, Shared (floating) Inspector, and a Shared Nurse. There is also the possibility of acquiring inspectional software and tablets to be used in the field. If a Town does not want to continue with being part of the grant, only a 30-day notice would be required to be released from the grant. Ms. Lamas spoke of the SAPHE 2.0 Bill being presented to the statehouse. This bill would help fill in the gaps of the public health system. Being part of a regional health system is part of the bill. If Ludlow signs to become a member of the RFR, Palmer would become the host community and be fiscally responsible for the distribution and oversight of the grant. One question brought forward from the Board is making sure that services are equitable across all municipalities involved. Ms. Florence mentioned the creation of a subcommittee made up of members of all the participating communities to ensure services are spread evenly. Mr. Tavares is not ready to join the RFR until he can perform more research into what is involved. Ms. DeSantis asked if each community would still be independent, or would the existing staff be used to provide services to other communities. Ms. Florence stated that each community would remain independent and only new staff hired specific to the grant would be shared. Ms. DeSantis asked if this would have to be signed by the Selectmen? Ms. Lamas said no, the Selectmen would only be notified of the regionalization of services. Board members discussed meeting on April 19, 2022 to vote on joining the RFR. Motion made by Mr. Tavares to hold off on voting until April 19, 2022 at 6:00pm in person. Seconded by Ms. DeSantis. All in favor 3-0.

There was a request received from Carrianne Duffey, 732 Fuller Street, requesting a special permit to house up to 13 chickens on his property. Motion made by Ms. DeSantis to approve the special permit for up to 13 chickens. Seconded by Mr. Tavares. All in favor 3-0. A letter will be sent to the homeowner.

Ms. Lamas discussed a new time off request form for office staff. Motion made by Mr. Tavares to approve the use of the time off request form for office staff. Seconded by Ms. DeSantis. All in favor 3-0.

Ms. Lamas discussed rescinding the mask advisory within the town. Ms. DeSantis would like to revisit this in the fall if the case numbers continue to increase. Motion made by Mr. Tavares to rescind the mask advisory within the Town of Ludlow. Seconded by Ms. DeSantis. All in favor 3-0.

Board members discussed the vacant department head position. Ms. Lamas mentioned that the inspector position is being presented to the Selectmen at their meeting of April 19, 2022 for approval. The department head position will be discussed at a future meeting.

Board members discussed having the office staff report out to the Board during the first meeting of each month. This would save the department on overtime. Ms. DeSantis would still like to see the Covid case numbers presented. If a staff member needed to present something in particular to the Board, they can come into the next meeting.

Mr. Tavares mentioned an email received to the Board from Ms. Kramer, Public Health Nurse. Ms. Lamas would like to discuss these issues in executive session. It is unknown if an exception applies for the reason of executive session. This will be researched and brought to an upcoming meeting.

Motion made by Mr. Tavares to adjourn the meeting at 6:41pm with Ms. DeSantis seconding the motion. All in favor 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Adrienne DeSantis
Secretary

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